



House of Representatives

# SUSTAINABLE ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT COALITION

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER—MARCH 2014

## TOP ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL STORIES

- **Obama to Request New Rules for Cutting Truck Pollution**—President Obama will direct the EPA to develop new regulations to reduce planet-warming greenhouse gas pollution from truck tailpipes by March 2016.
- **IG Probe Rejects Keystone Allegations**—The State Department's inspector general largely cleared the department of allegations that it had violated its conflict-of-interest procedures when selecting a contractor to analyze the Keystone XL pipeline.
- **Supreme Court Hears Sides in EPA Greenhouse Gas Regulations Case**—The Supreme Court heard 90 minutes of argument over the case *Utility Air Regulatory Group v. EPA* regarding the way in which the EPA goes about regulating greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Obama to Propose Shift in Wildfire Funding**—President Obama's annual budget request to Congress will propose a significant change in how the government pays to fight wildfires, a move that they say reflects the ways in which climate change is increasing the risk for and cost of those fires.
- **Nebraska Judge Strikes Down Legislature's Move Allowing Keystone XL Route**—A Nebraska judge struck down a state law that allowed Gov. Dave Heineman to approve the route of the Keystone XL pipeline, a decision that could significantly delay the \$5.3 billion project.
- **EPA Moves to Regulate Diesel in Fracking**—The EPA issued guidance governing the use of diesel fuel in hydraulic fracturing. Regulation of the drilling practice commonly known as "fracking" is primarily the province of the Interior Department. However, a 2005 law gives the EPA power over permitting for operations that use diesel.

## SEEC MEMBER LEGISLATION

Member Rep. **Matt Cartwright** (PA) and Member Rep. **Peter Welch** (VT):  
*H.R. 4092, Streamlining Energy Efficiency for Schools Act*

Bill Summary: Aims to provide a coordinating structure for schools to help them better navigate available federal programs and financing options for energy efficiency, renewable energy, and retrofitting projects. This legislation does not cost anything and will streamline the federal government while still leaving decisions to the states, school boards, and local officials about how best to meet the energy needs of their schools.

## SEEC ACCOMPLISHMENTS

**Member Retirements**—In response to the news that Vice-Chair Rep. **Rush Holt** (NJ) would be retiring, SEEC issued a [statement](#) thanking "our vice-chair, and a founding member, Congressman Rush Holt for his unparalleled environmental stewardship and commitment to scientific and research development during his career in Congress."

**Co-Chairs Tonko and Connolly Chat with *POLITICO***—From the [article](#): "Rep. Henry Waxman's decision to retire at the end of the year has left greens wondering who will step in as House Democrats' moral compass on environmental issues. But it might not be just one lawmaker who emerges as the chamber's loudest voice on climate change and other hot-button topics. SEEC has built a caucus of 56 Democrats who are vowing to carry on Waxman's legacy." Co-Chair Rep. **Gerry Connolly** (VA) says SEEC is trying to "institutionalize" the work that Waxman and others have done for decades on issues like climate change by building the broadest coalition possible. "It's not a handful of voices anymore. It's large environmental crowd-sourcing," Connolly said, adding that SEEC is now the second-largest Democratic caucus in the House.

**Members Push for PTC Extension**—SEEC Co-Chair Rep. **Paul Tonko** (NY), Member Reps. **Dave Loebsack** (IA) **Colleen Hanabusa** (HI), **Niki Tsongas** (MA), **Jim McDermott** (WA), and **Alan Lowenthal** (CA) took to the Floor to call for reinstating the wind production tax credit (PTC).

**Bicameral Group Blasts EPA's Strategy on Super-pollutants as Too Lax**—SEEC Climate Task Force Chair Rep. **Scott Peters** (CA) and Sen. Chris Murphy (CT) spearheaded a [letter](#) asking the EPA Administrator to take a second look at her agency's plans to phase out industrial emissions of super-pollutants known as hydrochlorofluorocarbons.

**41 Lawmakers Offer Proven Guide for Action on Climate**—Spearheaded by SEEC Members Reps. **Niki Tsongas** (MA) and **Ann McLane Kuster** (NH), forty-one members of Congress representing 9 northeastern states have just [added their voices](#) to the chorus calling for action to curb the unlimited carbon pollution that is driving change.

**Op-Ed: "Our Land, Our legacy, Our Responsibility"** co-authored by **SEEC Member Rep. Jared Huffman**—America's public lands are an essential part of our national heritage. The land and history we inherit defines us and we have a moral obligation to safeguard these national treasures and preserve this heritage for future generations.

## TOP ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT FACTS

- ◆ **41:** Number of billion dollar weather disasters that occurred worldwide in 2013, a new record.
- ◆ **82,000:** Gallons of coal ash spilled in the Dan River in North Carolina, polluting streams up to 70 miles away.
- ◆ **\$2 Billion:** Amount of lifetime energy bill savings provided by the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.
- ◆ **9.2:** Percentage of solar industry employees who are veterans, compared to 7.6 percent of all workers in the nation.
- ◆ **500:** Number of laws that nations around the world have passed to tackle climate legislation.

## SEEC MEMBER TWEET OF THE MONTH

Rep. Emanuel Cleaver @repleaver: #Windenergy powers clean energy #jobs in #Missouri. #MO is ranked 13th for wind potential. #Windworks

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